(b) whether the Government propose to close this airport;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if not, the steps being taken by the Government to develop this airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Darbhanga airstrip belongs to the IAF. It is usable by Avro/ Boeing 737 class of aircraft, provided adequate notice is given.

(b) & (c): As the airstrip is no longer required by the IAF for its use, a proposal to hand it over to the State Government is under consideration

(d) Does not arise.

[*English*]

Development of Inland Water Transport Facilities in River Brahamputra

5888. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Assam to develop more inland water transport facilities in the river Brahanputra;

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) A letter has been received a few days back from Minister (Transport), Government of Assam requesting consideration of their proposal to procure two hovercrafts for cargo transportation on Brahmaputra beyond Guwahati. The State Govt. had projected the proposal for acquisition of a hovercraft in the State plan (Annual Plan/8th Five year plan) and they were advised that this may be considered during 9th Five year plan after watching the performance of the hovercraft proposed to be acquired at other places in the country.

[*Translation*]

Development of National Highway No. 12

5889. SHRI RAM NARAIN BERWA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of bridges and bypasses which are being constructed on the National Highway No. 12 passing through the border of district Tonk;

(b) the total expenditure incurred thereon;

(c) whether the National Highway passing through Tonk district is in a dilapidated condition; and

(d) if so, by when it is likely to be repaired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Ten bridges & three bypasses are being constructed on the National Highway No. 12 passing through the border of district Tank.

(b) An expenditure of Rs. 1053.50 lakhs has been incurred thereon upto September 1991.

(c) No, Sir.